Gram Sevak

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Sheep rearing is an important activity in Kulu Valley C.D. Blocks

मज़दूर मंज़िल
ग्राम सेवक

GRAM SEVAK

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← Kumaon hillman collecting resin from a pine tree

The Five Pillars of Gram Panchayat

Vinobaji

I AM happy people in your district have begun to appreciate the idea of Gramdan. One expects an area like yours, which has a commendable record of service and bravery during our struggle for independence, to remain in the forefront of the social change that is taking place in the country. You have a necessary incentive. The people here are so poor. Gramdan is their only hope.

Everywhere I go they ask me 'What next? What happens after Gramdan? Who will manage and guide the affairs of the village?' I tell them that first a Gramsabha will be formed. One representative from every family would be its member. This body will ultimately be responsible for the well-being and development of the village. It will choose a small committee of five or six by a unanimous vote, as far as possible. This committee will be a body of active workers. It will have no executive authority. Its function will be to serve. The fountainhead of authority will be the Gramsabha. I have often thought about an ideal Panchayat—a committee of five dedicated to service. I would like you to appreciate the idea.

The first member of such a Panchayat is love. We want every family to extend the frontiers of affection so that the whole village will be included in it. We want land to be redistributed so that everyone has some land. So, love has to be our first member. He must really feel concerned about everyone in the village. Today such a feeling has become foreign to us. We know rivalry, envy or indifference. Our affection is limited to our immediate kith and kin. It fails to reach even the neighbour. Gramdan must mean an immediate change. The goodwill and affection that is concealed today in our hearts will begin to flow. The whole climate of the place will change.

Fearlessness

The second member of the Panchayat will be fearlessness. The whole world lives today under a deepening shadow of fear. One can see in the village that there is a crisis of trust. People have been thoroughly disillusioned and have become cynical. They do not trust anyone. It is the same in the cities, in the country, in the world. The great organisation of the United Nations has come into existence with the object of establishing peace in the world. But the representatives of various countries who are its members do not trust one another. They are afraid.

Gramdan means fearlessness. Before a Gramdan, farmers whose sons are receiving education at some college, anxiously ask whether they would have means to support their sons after a Gramdan is made. We tell them that fearlessness is the second member of our Gram Panchayat. Why should they then be afraid? The whole village will see to it that his education does not suffer. And the boy in turn will come back and serve the village when his education is completed.

Knowledge

The third member of the Panchayat will be knowledge. Knowledge and learning has been very nearly drained off from a village today. Anyone who has some learning or talent migrates to the town. The universities in the towns, have become the repositories of knowledge. They have become something like huge departmental stores, who sell knowledge to customers. In olden days men of God, who had some learning, wandered all over the country and carried education to the cottages in the distant hamlets of our country. They sang glories of the Almighty and told stories from the Puranas to the people. *Harikatha* was the medium they used. That institution has become nearly extinct. The Bhoodan and Gramdan has again popularized the vogue of padayatra—wandering over the country as a pilgrimage. Very few have an idea of the valuable work Bhoodan workers have done in spreading current knowledge to the people in the countryside. Universities must be mobile. They must go out. Bhoodan treks are walking universities. Recently we had a meeting of the leading educationists and Directors of Public Instruction from all the States in Karnatak. I placed a scheme before them. I said, every village must have a university. Pandit Nehru is exhorting the people to become self-reliant and stand up on their own legs. They must cease to depend so helplessly on the Government and its agencies. How are Pandit Nehru's exhortations to be conveyed to the man in the village? Where is the agency for this? Knowledge therefore will be the third member of my village Panchayat. Every village will make arrangements for imparting instructions to the people.

Industry

Industry will be the fourth member of our Panchayat. Most villages today depend exclusively on agriculture. Village industries are dying away. Village industries must immediately come to life when a Gramdan is made. Inhabitants of a gramdan village will immediately stop the import of mill-made cloth into the village. That means they will have to revive handspinning and weaving. On an average an individual consumes about fifteen yards of cloth. That means that nearly 15,000 rupees of a village, with a population of 1,000 are allowed to go out of the village for the purchase of cloth. A gramdan village will immediately put an end to all such drain on wealth and that means every effort will be made to revive village industries.

Sanitation

The fifth member of the Panchayat will be sanitation. Most villages today are insanitary. Gutters are allowed to flow on the street and heaps of rubbish and dung are allowed to accumulate all over. Men must keep their surroundings clean. They must build gutters and drains. They should have trench latrines. The night soil should be covered immediately with earth. Today it is left uncovered and there are flies all over. They carry contagion of all manner of diseases. Cleanliness is the greatest doctor. It will impart health and happiness. The village must have clean drinking water. They must have compost pits in which rubbish and dirt is carefully collected. The village roads must be swept and watered every day.

If a village is fortunate to have a Panchayat like this will it not be free and happy? Will they not be self-reliant and have a new sense of their own collective strength? I wish the people of this district will once again be up and doing. Sirsi-Siddapur had become legendary during the days of our struggle for freedom. People here have now rested for ten years. It is time they woke up and took up the work of Gramdan with the old fervour and will.

Father and Son

C. M. Medappa, Gram Sevak

N.E.S. Block Ammathi, District Coorg

I WAS once undergoing one month's practical training in the village Gopalpura in Mandya district. It was part of the six months course on Extension methods which every Gram Sevak trainee has to successfully undertake before he is appointed as a member of the Block staff.

As I am a young Gram Sevak trainee, I always prefer to contact young farmers and discuss matters concerning improved methods of agriculture with them. In the course of many such contacts I came across one Shivajee Gouda, a young farmer aged 20. Shivajee was practically under the thumb of his old father. He was never allowed to show any initiative in the field of agriculture; he was not given any responsibility. He simply did what his father asked him to do. The father was old, and his ideas of agriculture were older still. He was not even prepared to try any new practices which we were preaching. But the son was very keen to learn new methods and apply them to the field. I wanted to give a free hand to young Shivajee. I contacted his neighbour Kariappa Gouda, a farmer owning 10 acres of wet land. After long discussion Kariappa agreed to lease out one acre of his wet land to Shivajee, and that too on mortgage basis.

Shivajee took possession of the land, and began applying all improved methods for sowing seeds like preparing seedbed, selection and treating of seed paddy and thin sowing was carried on accurately. His father at first used to laugh at the doings of his son. But later on as Shivajee began paying more attention to his field than to his father's, the old man got annoyed with him as well as with me. He began to tell other villagers that the Gram Sevak trainee, if allowed to continue his work would not only spoil the youngmen, but the village as a whole.

We kept quiet. Days passed into weeks. Just after 3 weeks Shivajee's nursery plots began to yield results. The stout, green seedlings were ready for planting, whereas in the neighbouring plots they were of pale colour, and hardly 3" high. Shivajee carefully planted the seedlings in lines in the field which had been prepared with much care. A spacing of 10"×10" between the seedlings were maintained; rope measurement was used to keep the rows straight. As time passed villagers were astonished to see the growth in Shivajee's field, but they did not express their feelings openly. The period of my stay in the village came to an end. Before leaving for the training centre, I gave all necessary instructions to Shivajee and asked him to follow them minutely. After a month my training period concluded and I was posted to an area 100 miles away from Gopalpura. Before leaving for the place of the job, I paid the last visit to the village, saw how Shivajee was carrying on with the new methods, gave him some more instructions, asked him to have regular correspondence with me, and then left.

The report of the yield from this one acre of wet land which Shivajee intimated me through a letter after the harvest, was amazing. The yield was a record—4,640 lbs. of paddy in the place of 2,760 lbs. which his predecessor tenant obtained from the same plot, in the previous year. It was a feat never achieved in the village Gopalpura. I was very glad, but never could I expect a surprise which was in store for me. One afternoon I received a letter from Gopalpura, which read, ". . . ., I am really thankful to you. You have made a real farmer of my son, and have opened the eyes of old farmers like me. I would be very glad if you kindly pay us a visit. . . ." Can you imagine who was the writer of the letter?

DOING WITHOUT LEADERS

M. B. Totad, Gram Sevak,
N.E.S. Block Hukker. Dt. Belgaum, Mysore

IT WAS an ugly scene. The meeting which I had called at the Hanuman temple had turned into a regular quarrel. The crowd was divided into two groups. The villagers on one side and the leaders on the other. The villagers accused the leaders of misappropriating the funds that were collected 3|4 months back for putting up a suitable building for the existing primary school and improving its condition. The leaders in their turn abused the villagers. Hot words were exchanged. The situation became very tense. I knew not how to tackle the situation. After strenuous efforts the situation was calmed, but the meeting broke up. The villagers before leaving the meeting place declared that they would not join any development activity unless the fund that was collected was recovered from the leaders. It became quite clear to me that in the present set up no development activity could be started in the village Gotur. But it was the most important amongst all the villages in my charge. Being on Poona-Bangalore main road, it had a district Dak bungalow. Naturally most of the officials who passed by this route halted at Gotur. If nothing was done to improve the village, I would be considered inefficient; no one would understand my difficulties. It worried me most. The villagers had no faith in the leaders. That was the reason why the recently formed village panchayat was inactive.

I saw that if development activities had to be started in Gotur, the villagers and not their leaders had to be won over. I started contacting the villagers in right earnest. A new "Vikash Mandal" was formed in which none of the village leaders were taken. This convinced the villagers, and they were willing to join any development work that was to be started in Gotur. In a meeting of the "Vikash Mandal" it was agreed to raise fresh contribution on twice the assessment basis. A sum of Rs 4,000 was estimated for building a four-room school building. With the co-operation of the villagers a sum of Rs 3,600 was collected. But in the meanwhile it was decided to have 5 rooms instead of 4. It meant more money. One Shri N. S. Nagannavar donated 20 gunths of land for the school building. This greatly enthused the villagers. In order to raise the additional money required for a 5-room school building it was agreed that the Panchayat Committee should collect money by amicably settling legal disputes of the villagers. It had the desired effect. Sufficient funds were collected to build the 5-room school building. They were amazed to see how only through their contribution the village got a school building, which they never dreamt of. They realized the strength of their co-operation. An intense desire for village development possessed them. Development work started in full swing. They contributed in the shape of house tax to the Panchayat Committee, which, from the money so collected, built a drainage system measuring 400 yards, and provided lamp posts for the village roads.

The village Gotur is no more a house divided. The villagers are one when there is the question of village development. They are no more satisfied with only contributing their shares. They demand that Community Development programme contribute its share also. The Community Development programme has willingly given its share. That is how the primary school which some time back was the root cause of village quarrel has bound them into one whole. The result is the school has got its own building as well as an additional teacher and essential equipment for teaching science from Community Development programme as its share. To work in Gotur, with the villagers demanding for more development work, has become quite exciting.

An Old Woman's Blessings

B. S. Someswaraiah,
Gram Sevak, Mysore State

RIGHT at the entrance of Thirumani Circle—Pavagada Block there flows the dry North Pennar river. The area beyond this river is forsaken and neglected for want of proper communication. Hardly any officer of rank used to visit this portion till very recently. After the introduction of the N.E.S. Scheme and the coming of the Jeep, officers are visiting this area, though — occasionally. Achammanahalli is a corner village of this circle to which there hardly exists any road. For a decade or so no vaccination was given to the children. Their sheep used to die of Anthrax and there were none to tell them that there was a vaccine to prevent the disease. Their bullocks used to die of black quarter and the villagers were helpless.

No drinking water well existed in the village and women had to go long distances to fetch water from the deep irrigation well and accidents used to occur very often. The villagers had to be at the mercy of owners of the wells for the drinking water. They were obliged to do some service in return and those who dared to refuse had to go without water.

After the N.E.S. Programme was introduced in this area, the Gram Sevak visited this village many a time. He persuaded them to have a well and a school by contributing their share and to get their cattle vaccinated against diseases. The villagers who were not accustomed to such words paid scant attention to his good advice. They used to say "after all the Gram Sevak says good things for our sake. But who can believe him? Is he a God, to be able to save our cattle? At least there were none to save our sheep for the past so many decades." Daily a large number of sheep used to die. After a great deal of persuasion, one of them got his sheep vaccinated. This worked as a miracle and others followed. The epidemic was controlled immediately. They got their cattle vaccinated against black quarter. Thus they began to believe in the efficacy of our methods. Once the ice was broken, people began to respond slowly.

Steadily the Gram Sevak became familiar with the people. One night he convened a meeting of all the leaders of the village. The Gram Sevak told them the necessity of having a drinking water well. The rich people laughed over the matter but ultimately it was decided to collect contributions. One of them who was considerably rich refused to pay the amount suggested by the people. There was a split on this issue and the gathering dispersed. Thus ended the first attempt of the Gram Sevak.

Very often, such differences over small things used to break the solidarity of the village and the villagers would lapse into their usual lassitude. Time and again, efforts had to be made. It was almost a school for learning patience and the Gram Sevak had enough to try his patience.

Meanwhile an old man was sinking a well on the outskirts of the village and he had completed the earth work. The Gram Sevak requested him to donate the well to the village and said that the remaining work will be taken up by the Block. The grand old man said that he would inform the Gram Sevak in a day or two. To the disappointment of the Gram Sevak, the old man informed him later that his wife did not agree—"as the benefits of the heaven that would accrue by the good act cannot be shared".

Luckily, there was another outbreak of Anthrax and the man who had refused to cooperate with the people, now approached the Gram Sevak for the remedy. The Gram Sevak got his sheep vaccinated after extracting a promise that he would co-operate with the people. He responded and agreed to contribute towards the construction of the well.

Now the earth work of the well is almost complete, and they have thought of building a school and start a recreation centre. A lonely old woman—to whom it was very difficult to get drinking water from the irrigation well—blesses the Gram Sevak.

THE UNBELIEVER

· Sibananda Sarma,
Extension Officer, Baska N.E.S. Block, Mussalpur (Assam)

IT HAPPENED in the village Tuplia in the Baska N.E.S. Block in Assam. The Gram Sahayaks' Training camp, for the first time was being held in the village. The local M. V. School was the site selected for the campers to stay. They arrived in the evening before the camp started. Most of them were in high spirits. But at the very outset it was found that all but one—an influential village leader—was very critical. The campers called him "Suren Ka".

The camp started next day amidst great enthusiasm. During the break after the midday meal I went out to attend an important engagement. On my return I enquired from the Agriculture Extension officer as to the progress made. But to my surprise, I found him depressed. "It is a very tough job, sir", he said. "For one hour I have spoken, discussed and demonstrated the improved agricultural implements. But there is one amongst the Gram Sahayaks who is not prepared to believe me. He says we are all canvassers of some firm, whose good-for-nothing implements we are trying to sell," he concluded. I could realise why the Extension officer was depressed, and at the same time the mentality of Suren Ka. I told the Extension officer not to lose heart. "No honest labour goes in vain, it is sure to bear fruit. Suren Ka fully realizes the utility of the new implements, but he wants to show his own superiority. That is why he is talking in this vein." I told him and asked him to continue his work in right earnest.

Next morning as soon as the group discussion started I opened the subject of implements. All were in praise of them and expressed their willingness to purchase except Suren Ka and another camper. Suren Ka asked, "If we are to use these new implements what will happen to our Bamboo and wooden ones with which we and our forefathers have ploughed the field for ages past? What will happen to these new implements once they go out of order? Who will repair them? Certainly not our village blacksmiths. Why does not the Government distribute these implements amongst the villagers free of cost?"

The questions were very intelligent. I thanked him for the questions and replied to his queries with due respect to him. All the members of our staff praised his wisdom. This had the effect. Gradually his attitude softened and we found that he actually did not doubt the superiority of our implements, but his problems were different. I talked to him about his problems and suggested solutions. He was gradually convinced but was not prepared to admit it all the same. He raised objection to the mould-board plough, and said that he would not accept it till he tried it himself. This was the opportunity which I was waiting for. I asked Suren Ka, "Do you wish to plough the field yourself with our plough tomorrow morning ?" "Yes", said Suren Ka.

So it was arranged. Next morning Suren Ka ploughed the demonstration plot with a mould-board plough. His face beamed with joy and in the midst of ploughing operation he said "Agriculture Babu, please place an order for me for this plough. I will plough my mustard seed field with this." The whole assembly of the campers burst into laughter. They clapped their hands, to which Suren Ka nodded his head in approval. I thanked him profusely for the order.

TRAVELLING ALLOWANCE

Sir,

We, the Gram Sevaks have to be on tour for 20 days every month to cover the villages in our beats. But we are not entitled to T.A. & D.A., like other government servants. These constant tours are regular hardships to us, and it becomes very difficult for us to manage within the pay we get.

I would therefore request that the Government kindly consider our case and allow us T.A. & D.A.

Todabhim C.D. Block
12-5-58

Yours etc.
Murarilal Kaushik
V.L.W.

ARTICLE CONTEST

THE Ministry of Community Development invites Development workers and members of the public to participate in an Article Contest on 'Democratic Decentralisation' or 'The role of local self-governing institutions in India'. The articles will relate to the subject against the background of COPP team recommendations and the final decision in favour of 'Democratic Decentralisation'. The subject of the Panchayat has now been brought under the purview of the Central Ministry of Community Development and consequently the working of the Panchayats in the States will in future be a part and parcel of Community Development work. The articles will refer to these two aspects of the subject and may contain experience of the working of these institutions. Prizes will be awarded for the first six best articles as judged by a special committee to be set up by the Ministry of Community Development. There will be one first prize, one second prize, four third prizes and six Certificates of Merit. The first prize shall consist of a cash award of Rs. 500, the second prize of Rs. 300 and the third prize of Rs. 100 each. The Certificate of Merit will be issued over the signature of the Minister of Community Development. The first six best articles will be published in the Sixth Anniversary Number of *Kurukshetra.*

The following suggestions are offered as illustrative synopsis in the preparation of the article. The article throughout shall be narrative in treatment and shall be in the form of a thoughtful discussion of the subject. The listing of the following topics is intended merely to draw attention to some important aspects of the subject and the writer should consider himself free not to deal with all of them in his article and also to cover points not included in them but which he considers otherwise important.

(1) Give a co-ordinated scheme for the harmonious working of the Panchayats as part and parcel of our programme.

(2) What reforms would you suggest in the internal working of the Panchayats ?

(3) What are the major obstacles limiting the progress of the Panchayats? Give your own solutions.

(4) How would you finance the new self-governing institutions at the village level?

(5) What are your views on the COPP recommendations on this subject? How far do you agree with them? Give reasons for not agreeing with any of those recommendations and build up your own alternative proposals.

(6) Give your view about the working of local self-governing institutions in this country and your own proposals for improving them. Illustrate your ideas on this subject by citing specific evidences and incidents of which you are personally aware.

The closing date of entries to this contest is August 1, 1958. The articles, written in English, shall not exceed 10 typed, double-spaced, foolscap sheets and shall be addressed to the Editor, *Kurukshetra*, Ministry of Community Development, Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi.

MANGO—The King Fruit

Sahib Singh Ahuja

THE summer has come and along with it Mango, the king of fruits. It was also described as the fruit of Kings. Now it is the relish of rich and poor alike. It is chiefly an Indian fruit, though it is found in other tropical countries as well. India is its place of origin. It has spread to other countries along with our sea trade. The Portuguese probably carried it from Goa to East Africa in the 16th century. Thence, it went to West Africa and the adjacent islands and subsequently to Brazil.

It is not only one of the best fruits but also a sacred one. It can not grow in cold countries as it requires the hottest rays of the sun for ripening. There are many interesting stories about Mango. Once an Iranian traveller after his visit to India, was asked by the King of Iran to describe the taste of mango. "It is a fruit of heaven and its taste is beyond description", replied the traveller. Suddenly he got an idea. He smeared the snow-white beard of a courtier with honey and after taking the King's leave declared "If your Majesty designs to taste honey on the beard, you will get an idea of the taste of mango".

The mango is a beautiful fruit to look at. Its peculiar beak, round smooth surface, variety of colours and different sizes and shapes never fail to attract our attention. When green, it appears to be hard, but when ripe, it is very soft to the touch. Its different parts are skin, pulp, juice and the hard stone. In the mango-season the markets all over the country get loaded to repletion with this luscious fruit.

It has been estimated that our country produces nearly 8 million tons of mangoes in about 1,000 species annually. These are superior to those grown in any other part of the world. The chief varieties are: Deshi, Alphonso, Sanduri, Langara, Malwa, Kalmi, Totapari, Beganpalli, Neelampari,

Dasehri, Safeda, Fazli, Fajri, Chausa, Saroli, Fernandin, Mulgoa, Mundappa, Paidiri Rumani, and others. All these have different tastes and flavours. Opinions differ as to the best variety of mangoes in India but Alphonso of Bombay and Langara of Banaras are perhaps the most renowned.

The first and foremost use of the fruit is as a dessert. Appetite promoting chutneys, tarts, jellies and pickles are made from the unripe fruit. Often unripe mangoes are sliced and sun-dried (amchur) for future use in curries and pulses. The juice of the ripe fruit is sun-dried and is known as 'amawat' or 'ambapoli'. A delicious sherbet prepared from the baked green mango (panhe) is considered an antidote for the effects of 'loo'. Mango squash is used as a drink and flavouring agent for ice creams. The honey from the mango-flowers is very thick and sugary. The ripe fruits are an excellent source of sugars and Vitamin C.

Since time immemorial it has been mainly cultivated by seeds. Grafting is a relatively recent process, probably introduced by the Portuguese. Most of the improved varieties of the fruit are the result of a determined and relentless drive by the Muslim monarchs of India to select the best varieties of the fruit by the then known horticultural methods. Emperor Akbar was so fond of mangoes that he got about one lakh of mango trees planted in the Lakh Bagh in Darbhanga.

The total land under mango cultivation in India is about 3 million acres. Uttar Pradesh is by far the largest mango producing State with over 1.25 million acres of land under cultivation; Madras has over 2.5 lakh acres; West Bengal over 90,000 acres; Bihar nearly 60,000 acres and the Punjab 50,000 acres. In Bombay State, large areas in the Konkan and Surat Districts are covered by mango.

It grows from Kanya Kumari to Jammu, from Assam to Rajasthan, and from Dead Sea level to the Himalayas at the elevation of 5,000 ft. It flourishes best where there is enough rain to wet the soil to a considerable depth. The flowering season requires dry and sunny days. In humid places the tree does not bear well. The deep alluvial soils of the Gangetic Plain are best suited for mango cultivation.

The medicinal value of the fruit is high. It has been repeatedly mentioned in the Ayurvedic literature. It is a laxative, produces new blood and furnishes energy to the vital organs such as the intestines, heart, brain, and lungs. A pound of the fruit produces 320 calories of heat. Its calorific value is higher than that of rice, maize and wheat.

PAPER SCHEME

Sir,

I read with interest your feature *Bat-Chit* in the April issue, particularly the item on 'Postal Cheque System'. But my experience is that the account which you have given there does not give the true picture. After reading *Bat-Chit*. I was keen to avail of this facility. So I went to the Post office to open an account but the officer in charge told me that I must deposit a sum of Rs. 200/- in order that the account could be opened. That I was told, was the minimum amount required for the purpose. I had not that much of money with me. Neither can I ever be able to keep Rs 200/- in cash at a time. Naturally, my attempt to open an account proved a failure.

This procedure appears to be inconsistent with the objective of the Cheque System. Does the Government think that an ordinary villager is so well off as to deposit Rs 200/- in cash at a time to open the account? If that be the idea of those who have initiated this scheme, I must say that they are mistaken. The commercial banks require only Rs 50/- or less to open the Savings Fund accounts. If the Government really wants to help the villagers, then this sum fixed at Rs 200/- for the purpose should be lowered at least to Rs 50/-, if not less. Otherwise it will remain only a scheme on the paper.

Kumbhalgarh
12-5-58

Yours etc.
M. K. Rathor

I Tell My Own Story—Banana

P. Balasubrahmanyam
Extension Officer (Agriculture), Kurnool

Dear Readers,

I am one of the most acceptable trees known to mankind. Many a sage of India reposed beneath my shade and lived on my fruit. I occupy more than 20 per cent of the total area under fruits in the country. Andhra Pradesh, Madras, Mysore, Kerala, Orissa, Bengal, Bihar, and Bombay are my principal growing centres.

My fruit is nutritious and energy-producing and is a good source of mineral salts and vitamins. As a dessert, what an ideal fruit is mine? In South India, I am popular as a culinary too. The leaves serve as dining plates. The leaf sheaths are used as wrapping and packing materials. Banana fibre is used in floral trade, in cordage and cottage scale textile industries. My flour is a good substitute for wheat. The banana fig, conserves, crisps, jams and chips are a few other popular products well known. Added to these uses, please note a unique feature of myself. My production per acre is by far greater than through general agricultural or horticultural farming. A yield of 10,000 lbs. to 20,000 lbs. per acre is only child's play for me. Still, mind you, my husbandry is easy and production cost low. I do not like to blow my own trumpet further. Only my desirable characteristics have earned for me the name of a "Poor man's food".

I am a water loving, non-branching, soft stemmed perennial of about six to fifteen feet in height with a few big leaves. I am a tropical plant. I relish plenty of warmth and moisture in the air throughout the year. I flourish in rich, drainable soil.

More than sixty varieties of me are known. Of these, Pooran or Champa, Vamanakeli or Basrai or Kabuli, Bombay green or Pedda Pacha Arati, Rasthali, Chakrakeli, Nendran, Bankel or Monthan are same of the well known types.

The propagation is by rhizome. Spacing of six to eight feet depending upon the variety is advocated. Planting season varies from tract to tract, depending upon the rain fall of the area. In areas of low rainfall, irrigation is a "must" item in my culture. Heavy manuring will yield heavy returns. Farm yard manure has to be supplemented by nitrogenous manures like cake and sulphate of ammonia. The kind of manures applied and the dosage varies from tract to tract. It is applied in two or three doses. Once before planting, a second dose after six weeks and a third dose after four months is common in Andhra Pradesh. Green man-

uring is a practice recommended in some parts of the world for banana, but it is not resorted to in South India.

Intercultivation by bullock power is impossible. Weeding, formation of basins and channels and manure incorporation have all to be done by hand tools like mammuties. Propping with the aid of bamboo poles in an essential operation in highly windy regions. Occasional removal of suckers, hearts and dry leaves are the other operations that have to be attended to.

I start flowering in nine to twelve months (depending on the variety) and take another three to four months to mature my fruit. 600 to 1,000 bunches per acre (10,000 to 30,000 pounds per acre) with not less than 100 fruit per bunch is a common return from me.

There are only a few pests which affect me. Bunchy top, and Panama diseases exploit me to my detriment in some parts.

Space is the limiting factor. Otherwise I have many more details to give. Please contact the nearest agricultural official. He will tell you more about me and you can profitably exploit me. I am a "Billion Industry" in the West Indies. Then why don't you make me one in India, which is after all my original abode and where favourable conditions exist for my culture.

Thank you,

Yours sincerly,
"Banana"

THE TENDER SAPLING

Kottayi Jakob

PLACE—my quarters. The local Health Inspector was verifying some small-pox vaccinations in my area. There being no convenient place, he was using my office. Enthroned in my easy chair, with his peon and the village office peons waiting on him, he was examining the vaccination cards and pronouncing judgment. I was dealing with some papers connected with the distribution of water seal squatting slabs. "What are you busy with?" he enquired, for he wanted to be my friend. "So you are distributing at fifty per cent and even then you find it difficult to distribute! Well, I have sold fifty slabs at full cost, without a single pie of subsidy, with the help of a few prosecution cards only. Why should the Government waste this much, calling it Extension. I tell you, it is all a failure."

I felt insulted. But an Extension worker is not expected to lose his temper. He is expected to be one who has conquered *Krodha, Kama* and all that; and besides, he was my guest. At that time, I took it as an affront—almost a personal insult which called for an urgent explanation and satisfaction on grounds of honour. Were I a free man, by God, I would have given him my frank opinion about him and his sort. But later on, experience taught me that if I was to seek explanations like that, I would have had to fight every *chota* officer in every department I had to contact.

I don't blame him. Having been brought up in the role of a *chota* bureaucrat, his ideas too are old and obsolete. Extension in our sense is not in his vocabulary. Democratic persuasion and doing things by persuasion, by appealing to the people's common sense, sense of goodwill and sense of understanding is not in his code of duty. He does not find it necessary when he has his prosecution book with him.

A highly placed official of the Department of Agriculture was taking an in—Service training class in Agriculture. Concluding his class he remarked, "I have given you all the informations. But I don't know, what you will do. Yours is the Extension System—the method of high sounding words. You say you have done Sanitation Drive, Literacy campaign and propaganda for this, that and everything. I can't say what tangible work you can do."

May be, his opinion was quite sincere. If that be so, we are wrong and our system is defective too. Anyway, both cannot be right at the same time. You can well imagine how the tender sapling of Extension will turn in the hands of officials of this type.

WHO IS MY BELOVED

Shasikant S. Gadkari

WHEN I saw her first I was very pleased. How beautiful she was! She was selected for me by my father. When my father asked me whether I would like her as my companion, I agreed without the least hesitation, for the obvious reason that I was selected a V.L.W. and no one else could serve me as she could. Unfortunately at that time I could not keep close contact with her. Her complexion is black, but her features are very attractive. When I entered my actual field work she took keen interest in what I did and what is more, whenever I go on tour she is with me. Villagers always talk of her. Some of them appreciate her nature and her look. Some of them suggest that, I should go alone, but I could not go alone. She could not leave me alone. There cannot be two opinions that we love each other intensely. Some of my personal friends criticised me for it, but my parents do not take any objection.

My 'Beloved' required nothing more than the most necessary things. She is not fashionable. She is a very simple one. She advises me to live as simply as I can.

She likes my profession but not so much the designation "Gram Sevak". My 'Beloved' calls me Village Development Officer. Her argument is that when there is a person at the block level known as 'Block Development Officer', I being the person at the village level should be known as 'Village Development Officer'. Her other friends and some friends of mine also appreciate her views. I do not agree with her views but I cannot convince her as well as our friends. I am helpless. I believe that 'Gram Sevak' is not the appropriate translation of 'Village Level Worker' and so I tell her that I do not want to be called as 'Gram Adhikari' but 'Gram Karyakarta'. Still she is not convinced.

On the fourth aniversary of our lovely association I have promised her that I shall not part with her throughout my career—as without her my existence as V.L.W. will be impossible.

Would you like to be introduced to my Beloved? Then please come some morning when you will find her shinning in the morning sun after her toilet. I personally look to her toilet because she is my 'Beloved'. Can you name my 'Beloved'? I have requested the Editor to print her name prominently on this page in the next issue of Gram Sevak.

COMPOST TRAINING CAMPS

Sir,

I have the following suggestions to offer in connection with the compost training camps. They are born out of my practical experience as a trainee in one such camp. They are as follows:

1. The training period can easily be reduced to 4 or 5 days. Four or five practical demonstration classes covering 15 to 20 hours and theory classes covering 12 to 15 hours will be sufficient to cover the entire syllabus specified for the training. Thus there will be a saving of time for the farmer trainees who can ill-afford to stay away from their fields, seven days at a stretch.

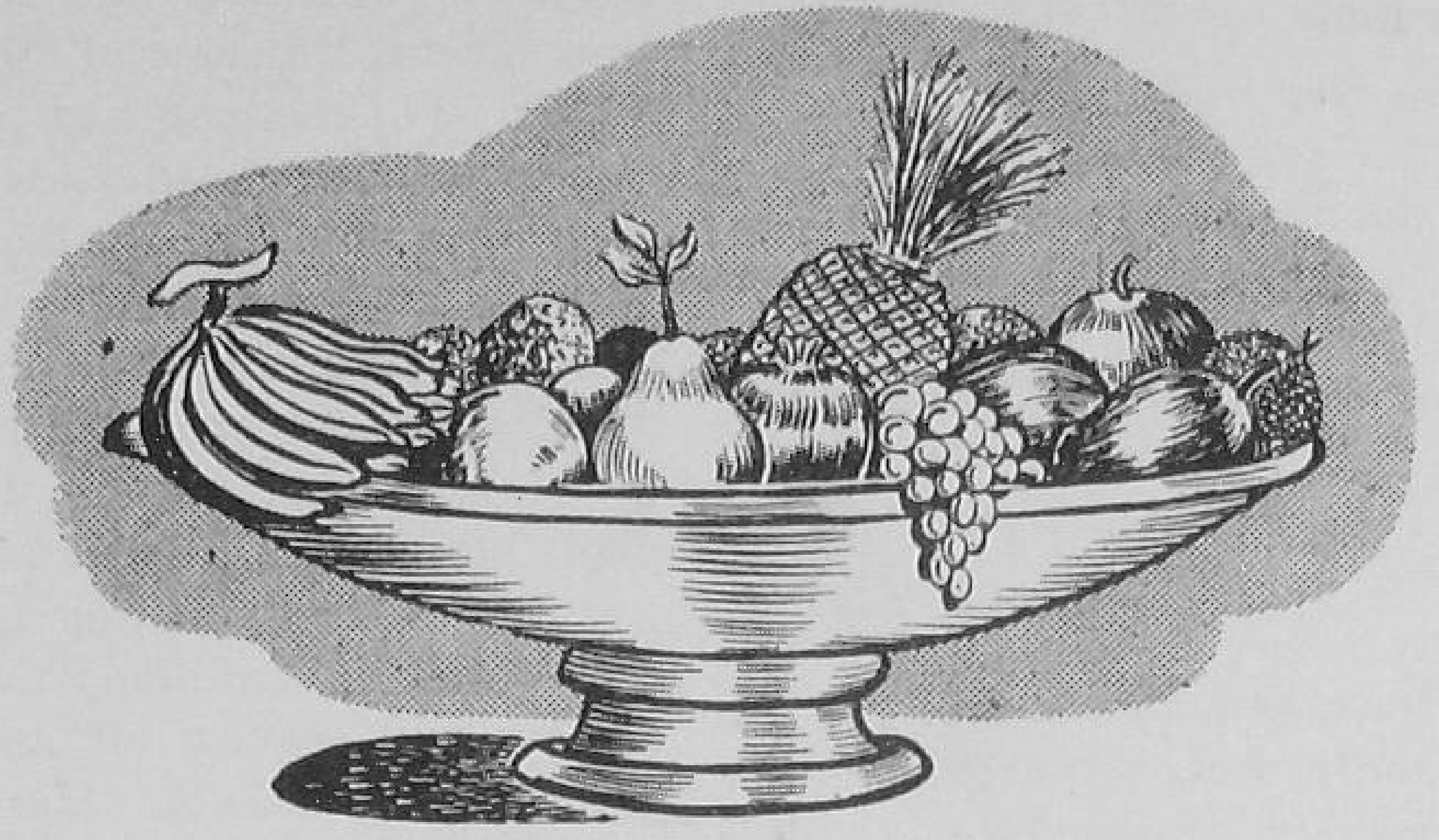
2. Besides the Compost Assistant, lecturers and instructors from agricultural colleges, basic and extension training centres should be invited to deliver lectures.

3. The compost training camps, as far as possible, should be held in villages where there are one or two progressive farmers, so that the new materials necessary for practical demonstration could be easily available.

4. The present system of paying the boarding charges to the trainees at the end of the camp is not helpful to the smooth working of the camp. It causes much hardship to the trainees who are expected to bear their expenses in the initial period. If the present system cannot be changed, it would be better to entrust the sum approved for the camp to the B.D.O., who in consultation with the trainees can arrange for their boarding and lodging.

Renigunta Block
Andhra Pradesh.
24-3-58

Yours etc.
E. Desingu Setty,
V.L.W.



Prepare Your Own Syrups, Pickles & Juices

We are glad to publish under this new feature details of recipes for the preparation and preservation of popular Indian fruits and vegetables. These were originally issued by the Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore and the Director of this Institute will be glad to provide any further information which may be desired by our readers.

SWEET MANGO CHUTNEY

SELECTION OF MATERIAL—Select unripe but fully developed fruit with the inner pulp turned yellow. The fruit should, as far as possible be firm.

PRELIMINARY TREATMENT—Wash the fruit carefully, preferably by rubbing with the hands.

PREPARATION OF FRUIT—Peal the outer green skin of the fruit with sharp stainless steel knives and grate the peeled fruit on a grater into fine slices.

RECIPE—The following recipe has been evolved as a result of experiments carried out in the Fruit Products Laboratories at Lyallpur, under the auspices of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research :—

1. Slices	1 lb.
2. Sugar	1 lb.
3. Salt	$\frac{3}{4}$ oz.
4. Spices (cardamom, cinnamom, etc.)	$\frac{1}{2}$ oz.
5. Red chillies	$\frac{1}{4}$ oz.
6. Ginger	$\frac{1}{4}$ oz.
7. Onions (chopped)	1 oz.
8. Garlic "	$\frac{1}{4}$ oz.
9. Vinegar (good quality)	3 oz.

ADDITION OF SUGAR—Add sugar and salt in the proportions prescribed above to the slices which have been warmed with a little of water to make them slightly soft. The mixture is left to sweat so that the added sugar and salt get dissolved in the juice excreted by the fruit.

COOKING—After sugar and salt have dissolved, the mixture is put on the fire and the spices, etc. (i.e., items 4-8 tied loosely in a muslin bag) are added, heating continued with occasional stirring till the mixture thickens sufficiently. Thereafter, the muslin bag is removed and squeezed to extract the flavour and aroma of the spices, etc. Vinegar in the prescribed proportions is added to the product at this stage and the heating continued till a product of desired consistency is obtained.

PACKING AND STORAGE—The product is allowed to cool a little and then poured into clean, sterilized, wide mouthed bottles which are then allowed to cool in the air and capped or into clean dry glazed jars and covered.

The Leather Industry in India

Jagjivan Ram

(Continued from the May Issue)

So FAR we have seen the position of raw materials and people engaged in tanning. At present there are 26 organised tanneries, but they are not working to their full capacity and their production has gone down because of shortage of raw hides. The number of such tanneries is not likely to be increased in the Second Five Year Plan.

Small scale chrome tanneries are developed mostly in Calcutta area and these are worked mostly by the Chinese community. Small scale vegetable tanneries are mostly in Madras. The fourth class tanning industry comprising village tanneries is spread throughout rural India. The overall output is considerable, but, due to its dispersed nature it is difficult to obtain accurate information about the correct capacity of their production. Small scale vegetable tanneries depend on manual labour. Bag tanning is very common in the villages and in the cities. Bag tanning requires small capital. The modern process of pit tanning and curing was introduced by Military authorities in 1857 at Government Harness and Saddlery factory at Kanpur. Since then individual enterprisers have started pit tanning. Pit tanning gives better yield of leather and has a lower cost of production but it takes nearly 3 to 4 months and requires a large amount of material and during the long process the capital is blocked. Pit tanned leather is less sketchy and is the only kind of leather which can go in belting, shoe and harness manufacture. The pit tan process requires scientific control and large capital. Hence the village tanners cannot avail of it. However, this process has affected considerably the bag tanning process and unless proper steps are taken, the village industry of bag tanning will not survive.

Leather Goods

I shall now deal with foot-wear and other leather goods. Foot-wear industry is by and large a handicraft industry. Originally this industry was an essential industry everywhere. We find *charmakars* spread throughout the length and breadth of this country. The foot-wear units were run on household basis. But now organised industries at Agra, Kanpur, Calcutta, Bombay are producing millions of pairs of foot-wear. In the year 1951-52 the production of large scale factories was about 5.6 million pairs and the estimated production of small factories and cottage units was 83 million pairs. Our first Five Year Plan was a great success and some remarkable results were achieved. Now our Second Five Year Plan is in force. We expect that the total average income of the country will increase and industrially we will advance a great deal and the standard of living of average man will be raised. It is estimated that demand for foot-wear will increase by 18 per cent in the plan period. So, the additional number of foot-wear required will be 16 million pairs, i.e., we will require 106 million pairs in 1960-61. Moreover, the need for leather goods will increase due to the new industrial development. Government, Railways, Post and Telegraph, Police, and military, will require more and more leather goods.

Need for Vigil

When we are thinking of a bright future, we will also have to consider the substitutes that will affect this industry. Some substitutes are already in the field and are competing with leather. The rubber, plastic and other materials are cheap and attractive and people are taking to these things. Artificial leather is also in the field and it is extensively used in Railways, Motor Cars, Aeroplanes and in furniture making. In spite of all these substitutes, leather has a place of its own; but we must never shut our eyes to impending dangers. Unless we are on our guard, the industry will suffer a set back. The world is fast developing. We are now in the sputnik age and scientists are

thinking even to reach the moon. Fashions are changing every day. Every day foot-wears in thousands of designs are coming up and as long as human nature is there, we will, have to adopt and not only adopt, but create new fields for our goods. In Western countries this industry made good progress because it was organised properly. In spite of heavy custom duties, they are able to compete with other countries. This is because of the quality of their goods. In India our first need, therefore, will be to organise this industry at village level and progressively to build it up Modern methods, co-operative effort, sufficient capital, scientific control and everything that is available to big organised industry must also be made available to small units and individual workers so that standard goods could be turned out. Complete mechanisation is possible at some centres and with a large block of capital, but it displaces the village workers and the small unit. Hence for certain goods, industrial colonies in leather goods should be encouraged; but we must also look to small and village units. Dr. Ambedkar demanded separate colonies for Harijans in order to get rid of the orthodox Hindus and others. This was for political purpose. But I suggest and press that separate industrial estates and colonies for leather industry, for modernising the leather industry, will achieve a double purpose. Village units will feed these with standard materials, which will be of a great advantage to the industry.

Marketing Problems

In leather industry, market like in all other industries, plays an important part. It is a buyer's market and un-like other articles it is a credit market. In leather industry unfortunately once a credit is always a credit and ultimately no cash is received. But with regard to basic materials in leather industry, it is a sellers' market and the buyer is completely at the mercy of the seller. We have to set up some market traditions and practices that will go for the improvement of this industry. Unless we look to the marketing side and improve the conditions there, it is likely that at one end industry might gain while, at the other, it will lose. We have, therefore, to be careful in evolving from the raw material to the finished product, healthy conditions and set up proper channels of marketing the goods.

This industry like other industries suffers from the middlemen. They really take the cream of the industry. The proper course, therefore, is to organise this leather industry in all its aspects so that there will be no scope for anybody to exploit the situation.

Workers Must Organise

In order to improve the conditions in this industry and to formulate a solid structure for its development, leather workers must be organised. Solid organisation is essential. Those who really understand the business and have a keen sense to develop it, must work selflessly for this organisation keeping everything above board. They should work with confidence and create confidence. The proposed organisation should have to :

(1) open depots both of raw materials and finished goods;

(2) distribute or sell the raw materials with reasonable margin of profits;

(3) find out markets for finished goods;

(4) encourage the local people to manufacture standard types of goods;

(5) make available standard tanning materials through a centralised organisation;

(6) advise and guide the persons engaged in flaying and tanning with the help of propaganda material; and

(7) open research institutes. Material be made available to the small worker and simple books in regional languages be published for the use of these workers.

(Concluded)

GHEE & MILK PRODUCTS

INDIA annually produces nearly 103.08 lakh maunds of ghee valued at Rs. 185 crores. Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Bombay and Bihar are the main ghee producing States, accounting for nearly 50 per cent of the total production. The outturn of ghee for a given unit of milk varies from region to region, depending upon the composition and quality of available milk and methods of fat extraction; all India average being 2.21 seers of ghee per maund of milk.

India's ghee trade is as old as her agriculture. Essentially a cottage industry, the preparation of ghee forms an integral part of the stock rearing system of farming. In rural areas, where the production of milk exceeds consumption, the only rational method of preserving milk fat through its conversion into ghee, is followed.

A major portion of ghee consumed in the country is used for cullinary purposes. It is also used for preparing indigenous medicines, hair dressing, massage and for flavouring snuff.

Most of the ghee sold in the market is prepared from buffalo milk, though, very often, it is mixed with ghee prepared from cow milk. In the trade, ghee is generally classified on the basis of production methods and physical quality, particularly of flavour, texture and colour.

A report on the 'Marketing of Ghee and Other Milk Products in India', released by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection of the Union Ministry of Food and Agriculture indicates that ghee was one of the first commodities to be selected for grading under Agmark Scheme to ensure availability of pre-tested high quality genuine ghee. This is done by following rigid quality control measures and grading, packing and labelling the produce under strict supervision of trained staff, eliminating all possibilities of adulteration. Pure ghee distinctly marked with Agmark labels is thus made available to the public.

MILK PRODUCTS

Of the various milk products prepared in the country, butter, dhai, khoa, ice-cream and cream, though produced on a much smaller scale as compared to ghee, are of commercial importance. The average yield of each of these products from mixed milk works out in the case of butter to 6.9 per cent, dhai 86.2 per cent, khoa 20 per cent, ice-cream 121.9 per cent and cream 9.8 per cent. The total annual production of butter in India is estimated at 19.37 lakh maunds. Of this nearly 7.4 per cent is creamery butter and the rest desi butter. More than two-fifth of the production is concentrated in the Punjab alone. Other important producing States are Uttar Pradesh, Bombay and Bihar.

The annual production of dhai in India is 356.76 lakh maunds. Its biggest supplier is Uttar Pradesh followed by Bihar, Andhra and the Punjab. Uttar Pradesh also accounts for a major portion of the 27.37 lakh maunds of ice-cream and about three-fourth of 42.58 lakh maunds of khoa produced in the country.

Cream is prepared and consumed only in urban areas. The annual production amounts to 3.31 lakhs maunds. Here again, more than half of the total production comes from U.P. and the rest from other States.

Doubts

Sir,

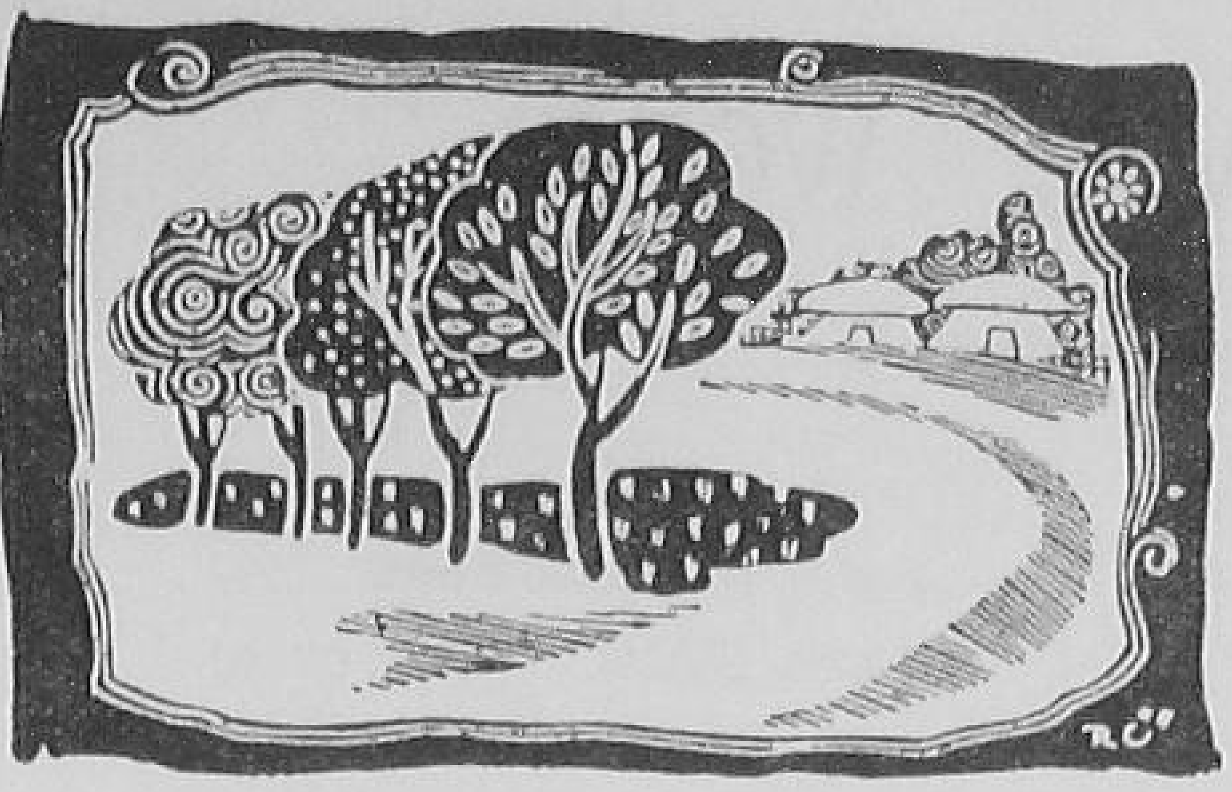
Will you kindly remove my doubts on the following points through the next issue of Gram Sevak.

(1) What is essential for a Gram Sevak to get promotion to higher posts—is it only efficiency in the work or efficiency and educational qualification taken together?

(2) Can an efficient Gram Sevak without good academic qualification aspire for promotion?

Yours etc.
Murarilal Kaushik
V.L.W.

Todabhim C. D. Block
12-5-58



Gram Sahayaks' Supplement

SOMEONE asked us recently : "What in your opinion is the biggest development in our programme during the last one year?" We at once thought of the COPP Report, the Abu Conference and the Evaluation Report but finally decided that we should look for some development in the actual field. Then we asked ourselves the question : "What is the biggest development which has taken place in the field?" Is it the Farmers' Forum or the Bharat Sevak Samaj or the Family Planning Unit in our village or the Bharat Darshan? These are, of course, important in their own ways but we wanted to put our finger on a particular development which has brought together a large number of village people in search of improved methods of production and a new way of life. And so we could not think of a better programme than the Gram Sahayaks' Training Camps which have sprung up all over the country, in every Block and in every Gram Sevak's circle.

More than 2,22,300 villagers, drawn from 2,220 village level workers' circles, have undergone training as Gram Sahayaks in 5,210 camps held all over India up to March 31.

The programme is expected to train up by the end of the Second Five Year Plan period, about 140 lakhs of selected villagers in various aspects of the community development work like agriculture, village industries, education and health. In view of the urgency for increasing agricultural production, training is being given this year only in improved agricultural practices and allied subjects like animal husbandry and minor irrigation.

Till the end of January, more than 2,860 three-day camps had been organised all over the country in various village level workers' circles where batches of 50 progressive farmers received the training.

The Gram Sahayaks are expected to introduce the newly-learnt techniques in their own fields and also act as local functional leaders encouraging their neighbours to adopt those techniques.

The largest number of Gram Sahayaks trained was in Madhya Pradesh : 23,778 followed by Bombay : 22,321, Andhra Pradesh : 20,042, Uttar Pradesh : 9,931, Rajasthan : 9,508, Bihar : 8,000; Assam : 7,912; Punjab : 6,363, Orissa : 5,468, Kerala : 5,195, Mysore : 4,782, Madras : 3,806, Delhi : 1,272, and Himachal Pradesh : 168.

By September 1958, about 10,75,000 Gram Sahyaks are expected to be trained in improved agricultural practices.

FOLLOW-UP WORK

Ratnakar Bhatkal

SINCE October 1957, Village Leaders' Training camps have become a regular feature in N.E.S. and C.D. Blocks. Much enthusiasm is being created in these leaders attending the camps with a hope that when they go back to their villages, they can impart the knowledge they have gathered and enthuse the villagers to adopt improved techniques in agricultural group of subjects. The success of the scheme, therefore, hinges on how the village leaders behave after return from the camps. This naturally calls in for a vigorous follow-up work to sustain their spirit and enthusiasm.

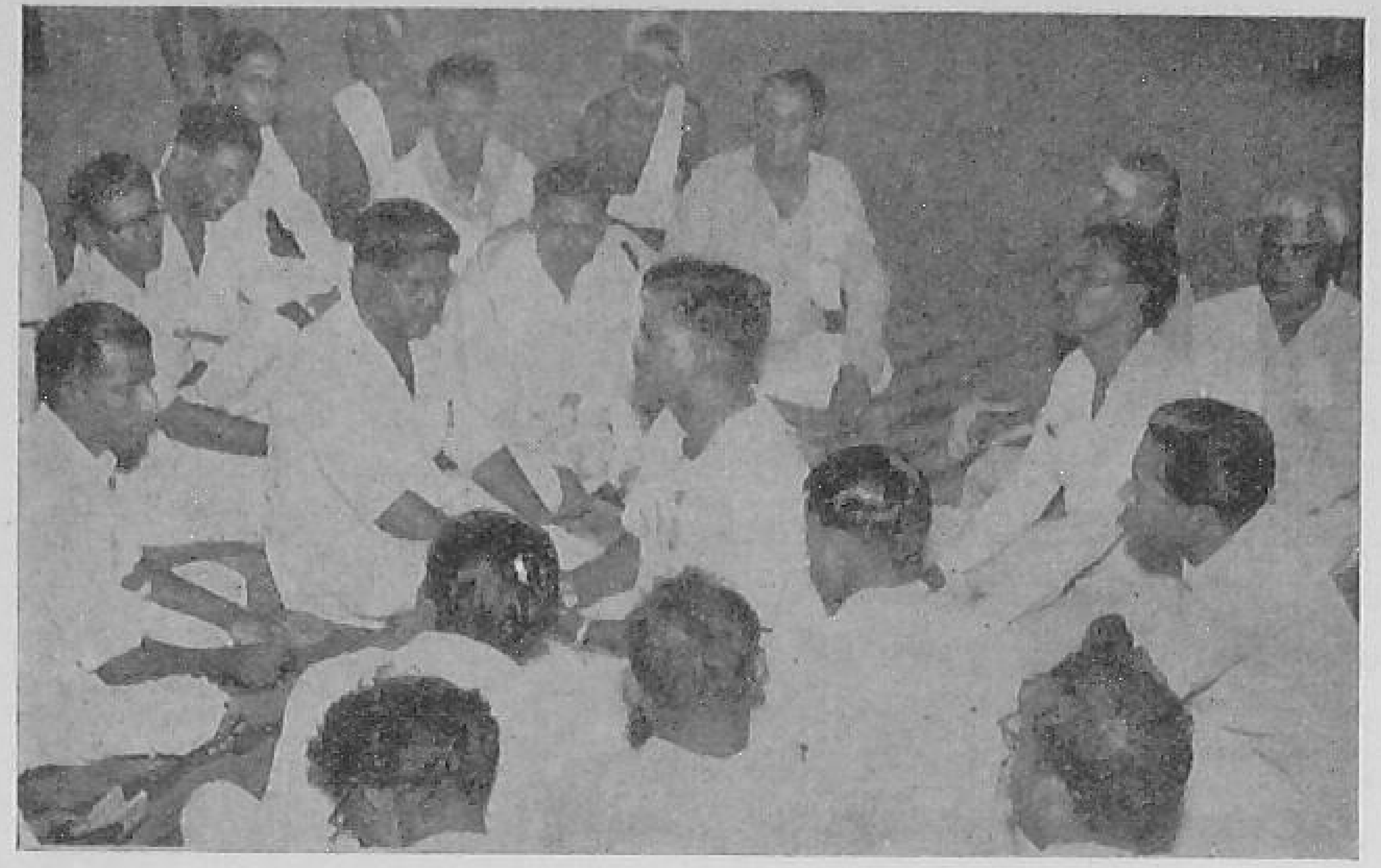
Many suggestions as how to keep up the initiative and enthusiasm of the village leaders have been listed in the Manual of Village Leaders Training camps. Cordial relations between the Block officials and the village leaders and frequent contacts between the two have been given the place of primary importance. But as the number of trained village leaders increases, these contacts are very likely to become fewer.

To obviate these difficulties, I have the following few suggestions to make :

1. The Government should accord the village leaders a position of importance in their respective villages. This would satisfy their vanity and urge them to work more.
2. Each N.E.S. Block or at least two to three adjoining Blocks jointly should be able to publish a monthly bulletin under the caption 'Village or Farm Leader' and a copy of the village bulletin should be supplied to each of the leaders free of cost. In this monthly publication, research notes, important Government orders, excerpts from the C.D. publications, individual leader's experiences in the field, examplary work turned out by the leader may be included.
3. Each leader may be supplied with one calendar and a diary every year so that he can write down the work he is doing in the village.
4. When the Ministers, Collectors or other high officials visit the villages, special invitations may be extended to these village leaders and they may be introduced to these dignitaries. In turn the Ministers, Collectors, etc., may enquire about the work they are doing and express their sense of appreciation where it is due.
5. Once in a year a seminar of these leaders may be held at different levels and some leaders from each Block may be sent to District, State or all-India seminars of village leaders.
6. It has already been suggested that the invitations may be sent to the village leaders on occasions like Diwali, New Years' Day etc. Wherever it is not done so far, this may be done.
7. A printed list of village leaders of each Block may be prepared and a copy of the same may be sent to all the Government officials of the Taluk and also to the District officers so that they can contact these leaders when they visit the villages while on tour.

To implement these suggestions a minimum of Rs. 1,000 per year is required. Further, it will not be difficult to establish a model farm in each of the holdings of the village leaders without any further expenditure to the Government so that they will be able to show their neighbours the improvements effected in their holdings. Their leadership and the practical demonstration will convince the neighbours to adopt these improved methods on their own holdings also.

One can, therefore, visualise a day when the village leaders will be working in the villages more than the paid Government servants in all spheres of rural development without expecting any aid or return from the Government.



Group discussion amongst Gram Sahayaks : Tirumanur Block (Madras)

IMPROVED SEEDS THRO' GRAM SAHAYAKS

Ram Krishan

Dy. Development Commissioner, (Agriculture), Uttar Pradesh

GENERALLY speaking, the improved seed is in short supply everywhere but the problem becomes more acute in places where the holdings are small. This is particularly true of the eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh. When the time for distribution comes, it becomes difficult for the Agriculture Department to answer the needs of the farmers with regard to 'A' class seeds. Every year attempts are made to intensify purchase programme but without much success. The usual argument with the extension workers is that large scale purchases cannot be made from the eastern districts, as the holdings being small the cultivators after meeting their food requirements are left over hardly with any surplus.

About two years ago, I attended a meeting of the Block Advisory Committee, of the N.E.S. block Chail Khas, district Allahabad. While answering to some of the difficulties of the Committee I posed the problem of finding adequate quantities of improved seeds for saturating the block area and exhorted each of the members present to make genuine efforts in that direction. Immediately there came forward an individual by the name of Ram Chandra Pande who took upon himself the task of making his village produce only the 'A' class seed.

I visited his village just after two years and found that Ram Chandra Pande had lived up to his promise. His village alone supplied 787 maunds of 'A' class seed of paddy N22 to the District Agriculture officer. He was also planning to supply about a thousand maunds of wheat in the coming season. He had every hope that in the following year the entire produce of his village would go for seed purposes only and for their requirements they would buy from ready market. This transaction he had calculated would mean a profit of about Rs. 15,000 to the village at about Rs. 3 per maund. There are about 90 families in this village and distributing this additional income on family basis, it works out to about Rs. 180 per family per year.

Shri Ram Chandra Pande's effort made history. He has been an old political worker, but he used to spend most of his time outside his village. He would come to his house only once or twice in a month, more or less as a guest. People called him mad. He was himself tired of his life because nobody in the village liked him. The tide however turned. When the N.E.S. block started, he brought 10 seers of Moong TI seed from the seedstore. He sowed some seed in his land and persuaded others to sow the rest. But none came forward. Hence most of this seed remained with him unsown. He then heard of the Japanese method of paddy cultivation and brought the news to his village. But none was ready to

act on his advice. Even the V.L.W. could not persuade a single individual in the village to adopt the Japanese method of paddy cultivation. Then he approached the Block Development Officer to hold a meeting for propagating Japanese method of paddy cultivation in his village. A compact area of 2 or 3 fields was selected for putting up the nursery for Japanese method of paddy cultivation. The establishment of a nursery on recommended lines was a new task and hence discouraged the farmers because it meant a little more effort and time on their part. Before the nursery was ready the canal went dry. People rushed to Ram Chandra and told him that the whole nursery would now dry up and they would be ruined. But God came to Ram Chandra's rescue. There was a rain. Everybody was satisfied and said that God was on Ram Chandra's side. Now it was time for transplanting the seedlings in the field. Transplanting in this village was done mostly by women, and they protested that they would not be able to transplant them in line as they were accustomed to transplanting 4 to 5 plants in each hole at close distances. Many of them left the fields, but Ram Chandra along with his wife and children stuck to his part. He announced a Saree as a prize to the best transplanter. This gave them some incentive for work. They acquired some experience after a few days and thus were able to transplant the seedlings in straight lines without much difficulty. About 60 acres were put under Japanese method that year in the village. The stand comparing with the old method looked in the beginning rather thin. This discouraged the farmers. But as the time advanced everybody was surprised to find 30 to 40 tillers per hole.

Everybody now began to admire Ram Chandra. The crop bore a lovely look and when the produce was brought home for threshing, there was glow on the faces of those who followed his advice; those who did not follow him were much disappointed. The new method gave them twice or thrice the yield they got in previous years. Nobody was happier than Ram Chandra and his wife. And this enterprise made Ram Chandra who was only a despised man the leader of his village. He was now a man of much esteem. Every one would now consult him. The admiration of the people was so great that Ram Chandra was unanimously elected the Pradhan of the Gram Sabha. The people gave him the right to nominate anybody he liked to the Panchayat. His village next year had more than 70 per cent area under Japanese method of paddy cultivation. Rest of the area though not under Japanese method of paddy cultivation, was top dressed with chemical fertilizers.

He persuaded everybody to carry out roguing and sow only 'A' class seed. The village sold about 100 maunds 'A' class seeds in the year 1955-56, but this year, in Kharif alone, about 787 maunds of 'A' class paddy N22 seed was sold out to the Government by 25 cultivators of this village. The village hopes to sell all quantities of improved seeds produced in the village to the Agriculture Department.

Each N.E.S. block in Uttar Pradesh is expected to have 3 seed stores with a total stock of about 6,500 maunds of improved seeds. If one village in each block is organised like Ram Chandra's Amarsia, the entire requirement of seed for the N.E.S. block for necessary replacement and increase in existing stocks would be met by this village alone. The supervision for this kind of planning will be easy. There will be no difficulty in payment also. Roguing could also be supervised conveniently. Every N.E.S. block in the country can follow this procedure and develop a few villages solely for seed production. A village or two have some good selfless workers who could be earmarked for this purpose. Leaders are no doubt born, but they could be created also, as appears from the history of Ram Chandra provided there is sincerity of purpose in the district and the block staff.

AMRU—THE MAGICIAN

K. D. Barve

B.D.O. Khairagarh, Dist. Durg (M.P.)

IT WAS the third and the last day of the first Village Leaders' Training Camp held at village Baldeopur in the Khairagarh Community Development Block. Village leaders, forty five in number, drawn from all over the Block were listening to the B.D.O. who was summing up the discussions held on various topics and particularly on the subject of irrigation.

All faces except that of Amru Patel of village Katalwahi were wearing gloomy expression. The reason was not far to seek. The rains did not behave well and the crops had almost failed. The BDO who among other things was stressing the importance of constructing small irrigation projects thought he was not proving effective to his audience. He paused for a while and then posed a question. "Do you know the secret of the smile on the face of Amru? When all of you are looking worried, why should he also not look like that?"

There was no reply—no stir—no movement. After a couple of moments the BDO requested the grand old man Amru to come near him and questioned him.

"How is crop this year in your village?"

"It's nice, sir," quick came the reply.

"Why is it good in your village when the same has failed almost in all the villages in the Block?" asked the BDO.

At this Amru gave a broad smile and kept mum.

The BDO urged him, "Come on, tell your brothers assembled here what is in your mind."

Amru began to narrate in his own way and the members of the assembly were observed stretching their necks to listen to the simple old man.

"It was all like this. We constructed a bund across the Nala in our village last year under the Community Development Programme and it helped us store water, irrigate the fields, reap the crop and become happy." Warming up the Patel exhorted his listeners that if they want to be happy they must take up construction of such projects wherever suitable sites are available and added, "my friends, it was not a difficult task provided there is a will to do it."

The camp was over and the BDO and his colleagues after meeting the trainees individually and begging leave of them got into the jeep. When the vehicle was about to leave, the BDO glanced at the premises of the camp to find Amru surrounded by the village leaders.

Except for the noise of the vehicle which was heading towards the Block Headquarters there was silence for a pretty long time.

"Will they do some thing?" A.E.O. broke the silence. "Let us see," muttered the BDO and then added, "when the Central and State Governments are laying so much stress on holding such camps they cannot be without meaning."

The journey came to an end while the party was discussing various features of the camp.

The routine business of the Block continued from the next day. As days passed the memory of first camp began to fade away from the minds of the Block staff. It was when nearly three weeks were over that the plans for holding the next camp began to be chalked out. The Extension Officers sitting round the table were discussing the plans with the BDO when suddenly the light faded. Every one looked at the windows to discover a large gathering of villagers outside the room. The BDO rushed out of his room to enquire as to the reason of the assembly.

Premlal and Dukal leaders of the gathering stepped forward and presented an application and said that the villagers of Salomi have decided to construct a small irrigation tank and that they stand in need of help.

"But then why the whole village is here?" asked the BDO and added, "both of you

could have come for this purpose."

"The villagers are so enthusiastic and anxious about this matter that they were not prepared to stay back in the village and wait for the result. They preferred to come—trekking all the way to the Block headquarters," replied the two. Who will not be moved by such a sight? The BDO announced that he would immediately go to their village along with the Overseer to examine their proposal. Within three days more than five hundred men and women were seen happily participating in the construction of the tank. A beautiful sight indeed!

Not a week passed thereafter in which construction of a new small irrigation project was not taken up.

Two, four, seven, eleven, thirteen and now the fourteenth project is in the offing—cracking through one of the most difficult villages—Sonbhatta. Nearly 4,000 acres of land have suddenly come under irrigation where there were hardly any irrigation facility in the block area worth the name. This speaks highly of the might of the rural people—of their desire to throw off the yoke of poverty—of their strong faith in community action. The infection is not now confined only to Khairagarh Block alone but has happily spread to the adjacent blocks as well where the small irrigation projects have begun to spring up. When the BDO and his staff visit the villages where construction work is going on they find the villagers discussing various development programmes enthusiastically. The Agricultural Extension Officer in particular is found to make best use of these enthusiasm. He now finds it much easier to push through the programme of the construction of new paddy bunds, use of fertilizers and green manures.

The BDO and his team who must naturally feel proud of the villagers' achievements were the other day discussing at the staff meeting how all these happy things were coming about. "Obviously due to the performance of Amru, the magician at the Village Leaders' Training Camp," pat came the reply from the little Gram Sevak, Sharma of Baldeopur circle.

Some musical instruments of Chotanagpur Adivasis

NEWS FROM KERALA

THE Government of Kerala have issued the following instructions to the Development Workers on the subjects of Gram Sahayaks' Camps:—

The camps should be considered as *"serious subject-matter functional camps"* and the number of trainees should generally be limited to 50, as otherwise it will be difficult to pay individual attention to each trainee.

Comfortable seating arrangements should be made in each camp for holding talks and discussions. Seating may be arranged preferably in a horse-shoe fashion.

These camps are purely educational camps which impart training and not seminars. There will be no group discussions as in the seminars. A President may be elected.

Demonstrations should be arranged to support the talks wherever necessary. Demonstrations proposed to be conducted should be checked up at least 24 hours before they are held. The number of campers may be divided into groups based on the number of demonstrations arranged.

Specialists and District Officers when they visit the camps should supplement the talks by the Extension Officers and not supplant them. Even though the camps are confined to agricultural group of subjects like Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and minor Irrigation, there is no objection to include talks on Panchayats and Co-operatives also as these subjects are connected with the agricultural group.

Shramdan should be purposive and should preferably be arranged with reference to the agricultural activities like making compost pits, making composts, preserving cattle manures, laying kitchen gardens, planting seedlings, etc. Emphasis should be placed on making determined efforts to promote green manuring, rural composting, growing improved varieties of fodder, selling vegetable seeds, manures, seeds, etc.

Sports items need not be conducted in the evenings. The evening hours may be profitably utilised for conducting demonstrations. Likewise melas, harikathas, etc. should not be conducted during day-time. If such entertainments are arranged by the people, they should be conducted only at nights and should invariably be finished by 10 or 10-30 P.M.

The Block Development Officers should focus their attention on the follow-up activities of the Block staff with the Gram Sahayaks so that the latter may implement their individual and group projects and through them their groups and the village communities.

A monthly return on the conduct of Village Leaders Training Camps in the various Blocks has to be sent to the Ministry of Community Development so as to reach them by the 20th of the succeeding month. The Block Development Officers should therefore forward to the Director of Training, Village Leaders the monthly return in the prescribed proforma so as to reach him positively by the 10th of each succeeding month.

News From Andhra Pradesh

THE following further instructions have been issued in respect of organisation of training camps for Gram Sahayaks in Andhra Pradesh.

In order to avoid controversy over the term 'leaders' the term may hereafter be changed into 'Gram Sahayaks' and the specialised camps started from 2-10-1957 be termed as "Functional Gram Sahayak Camps".

The Village Leaders' Training Manual published by the Ministry of Community Development has to be fully digested by the Block staff and for this purpose the Block Development Officers and Project Executive Officers are requested to hold a study circle at the fortnightly staff meetings in the Block and ensure that the staff gets fully acquainted with all the chapters in the manual. In these meetings the working of the camps should be critically reviewed in the light of the instructions contained in the manual.

Functional camps are serious subject matter camps and no item not connected with the subject matter of the camp should be included. Melas, Bhajans, Festivals, Public Meetings, games and other items of physical recreation are quite out of place in the present series of camps in Agriculture group of subjects, and the time allotted for games and sports in the time-table should be utilised for field demonstration.

At present, the Follow-up Registers are being maintained by the Village Level Workers in the form prescribed in the Memo first cited. It is observed that when the Extension Officer or the Block Development Officer visits the village, he is not able to get at the registers due to the absence of the Village Level Workers at that time. It is, therefore, considered necessary that the Extension Officers and the Block Development Officer should also maintain these registers and post the field particulars of follow-up activities. The 'Sahayaks' should like-wise be supplied with note books, wherein they may write their activities about individual and group projects. If any of them is illiterate he can have it written by seeking the assistance of someone else. A note on the suggestions and the help rendered by the Block staff should be made in the Note Book of the Sahayak by the Extension staff. At the time of Fortnightly or Monthly Block staff Meetings, the Extension staff should post these details in respect of Sahayaks in the Block Development Officers register.

The item relating to follow-up activities should be included in the Agenda of the Block and District Advisory Meetings in order to streamline the good work done, the difficulties confronted and the hurdles surmounted.

The existing Nawajavan Kisan Clubs and the Senior Youth Clubs should be fully taken advantage of as an excellent forum for contact by the Extension Staff to disseminate the recommendations and to formulate and review plans for production, etc. These clubs should be looked upon as the main medium of spreading agricultural and allied information in the village.

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"Through the children of today, we build the India of tomorrow"—*Jawaharlal Nehru*

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